

put aside partisanship and lead the way toward recovery. I hope we can get on with that. I hope we can get here to the floor, work as long and as hard as we have to, and with urgency, to show once again that we are supporting the interests of the American people.

It happens that these companies are in an obvious place where something terrible can happen. But what matters is that we work to do something that brings value to our country, value to our people. We have to at least consider it. I am not saying we have to pass any particular bill. We want to make sure the things we are concerned about are in there. But we have to have activity instead of stubbornness and an unwillingness to actively consider solutions to the problems facing us.

We are a great country, America, with its abundant resources and strong people, willing and eager to do their share. And as their representatives, we can do no less. So I hope we will see some activity fairly soon that tells the world out there that the Senate and the Congress are at work trying to help solve the problems instead of searching for ways to obstruct solutions.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

TRIBUTE TO SENATORS

CHUCK HAGEL

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I rise tonight to recognize and pay tribute to my colleague from Nebraska, Senator CHUCK HAGEL, who is retiring from the Senate. When I entered this body nearly 8 years ago, Senator HAGEL welcomed me, and since then we have worked together on a number of important issues for the good of our great State and our country. We teamed up to seek Federal assistance to help Nebraskans recover from natural disasters, such as floods, ice storms, and drought; to win congressional approval for naming the new FBI building in Omaha after our esteemed late colleague, Senator J. James Exon, and on numerous other Nebraska projects.

Like me, CHUCK HAGEL grew up in small communities in Nebraska. It is a special experience to be raised among Nebraskans under the wide open skies of the Great Plains. Helping hands are always nearby and opportunities seem limitless. From our families, friends, and neighbors, we both learned the bedrock values of love, of community, of faith, responsibility to others, and devotion to country. These values have been evident during Senator HAGEL's tenure in this body.

Also evident has been an important perspective he shared, one only a few Senators know firsthand, about the reality of war, gained as a decorated U.S. Army sergeant on violent battlefields in the Vietnam war and later as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Veterans' Administration during the Reagan administration.

Here in the Senate, he represented the people of Nebraska and the United States well as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, the Banking Committee, the Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, the Intelligence Committee, and the Rules Committee. He will long be remembered as one of our most outspoken and candid Members, as a patriot, and as one who took seriously his duties. Particularly through expressing his views on foreign policy, he fiercely advocated the constitutional principle that the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government are equal partners.

I take this opportunity to commend him for his honorable service to our State and Nation over these many years. And whatever path CHUCK HAGEL embarks on next, I wish him and his wife Lilibet, daughter Allyn, and son Ziller only the best in their lives. It has been an honor to serve with him.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Are we in a period of morning business or has it been closed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes, The Senate is in morning business.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that morning business be closed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

ADVANCING AMERICA'S PRIORITIES ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3297, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 3297, a bill to advance America's priorities.

Mr. REID. I now ask that motion be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right. The motion is withdrawn.

ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 1128, H.R. 7005. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the cloture motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 1128, H.R. 7005, the Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act.

Harry Reid, Debbie Stabenow, Byron L. Dorgan, Robert P. Casey, Jr., E. Benjamin Nelson, Joseph I. Lieberman, Sherrod Brown, Claire McCaskill, Carl Levin, Daniel K. Akaka, Barbara A. Mikulski, Charles E. Schumer, Christopher J. Dodd, Patty Murray, John D. Rockefeller, IV, Richard Durbin, Frank R. Lautenberg.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask the live quorum, mandatory under rule XXII, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTOMOBILE CRISIS

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk a little about the so-called auto bailout bill that is someplace out there wandering around. We don't know where.

I was in Iowa last week and traveling around and talking with people. A couple things kept coming up from time to time. One was the money we put into the so-called TARP program, the money we gave to Secretary Paulson before we adjourned in October and went home for the campaign, the \$700 billion. As we know, they got \$350 billion of that, and now there is some talk that they will come back for the other \$350 billion sometime, probably not this year but early next year.

As we look at what happened to that \$350 billion, a lot of people are quite disturbed, and count me among them. Rather than using the money to put out to banks to help extend credit, some of the banks were using it to buy other banks and get bigger. Some banks are using this money to invest in private equity firms, buy up businesses. One came to my attention last week when I was in Iowa—a company I don't need to name—a company that had gone into bankruptcy. The owner of the company had wanted to buy it out of bankruptcy for a certain